

## **The Learning and Development Center Announces the Commencement of the Ask the Expert Panel Series**

*Ask the Expert Panel Series is a unique organizational development (OD) intervention to address concerns presented by middle and senior-level managers from the 2014-2015 Leadership Institute Program (LIP)*

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Houston, TX—May 19, 2015—**The Learning and Development Center's Organization Development (OD) and Auxiliary Service team hosted its first session of the seven part Ask the Expert Panel Series entitled, "Right Person, Wrong Job." The panel featured Harry Hayes, Chief Operations Officer and Director of the Solid Waste Management Department, Mario C. Diaz, Director of Aviation for the Houston Airport System, Viveca Sonberg, Assistant Director of Management Support Section for the Public Works and Engineering Department, and Julie Landry, Executive Recruiter of the Human Resources Department.

The panel discussion, which was complimentary and open to all City of Houston employees, took place Tuesday May 19, at 1:00 p.m. at the Learning and Development Center (4501 Leeland Street, Houston, TX).

All panelists stressed the importance of providing employees opportunities to develop their knowledge and skill, and agreed that a strong support network is critical to the success of every employee. "Set clear objectives and think through what must be done, ensure that there is a cultural fit and a clear understanding of the role. If you make the mistake of hiring the wrong person for the job, own up to your mistake and rectify it immediately. Do not leave someone in a position where they do not belong," said Director Diaz.

Taking the floor, Director Hayes noted the importance of this discussion, particularly peer-to-peer introductions, and the identification of skill sets. "It is imperative that the successor is capable of taking the organization to the next level," said Mr. Hayes.

Assistant Director Sonberg, offered solutions to mitigating barriers to success. "Then there are times when work evolves. For example, at the introduction of new technology and the re-engineering of a position. These are times when training and education are necessary to keep an individual successful. Nevertheless, consider whether or not changes to the scope of work require a reclassification. Perhaps, it is pervasive to the industry," said Ms. Sonberg

Executive Recruiter Julie Landry, highlighted a number of factors that should be considered as a part of the decision making process, addressing: recruiting standards, interviewing methods, onboarding and cultural acclimation. "Some hiring managers are looking for the perfect person, but we all know unicorns do not exist. Be honest in your search and know that you will not always get it right," said Ms. Landry

"Each of us has a unique blend of knowledge, skills and abilities that compliment a specific job. As managers and supervisors, it is important to make certain that the people we select for positions actually "fit" the work they are hired or promoted to do," said Marie Stephens, Moderator and

Senior Staff Analyst for the OD and Auxiliary Service team of the Learning and Development Center.

The closing remarks were delivered by Jane E. Checks, Deputy Director (Chief of HR Operations) of the Human Resources Department, who encouraged participants to develop their people, look inward and give their employees every opportunity to succeed.

### **About the Learning and Development Center**

The Learning and Development Center (LDC) is a strategic development and employee performance improvement organization that offers comprehensive training solutions that significantly affect performance and institutional outcomes. The LDC's consultancy is comprised of an experienced team of professionals with the knowledge and capabilities to design and implement strategies that help our clients' achieve their goals. The LDC's primary focus is to provide transformational learning programs that enhance the skills, job competencies, and improve performance and overall satisfaction for the City of Houston's workforce.

For more information, please visit the LDC website at <http://www.houstontx.gov/ldc/>

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